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COMBINATION POWER CORD AND COMPUTER SECURITY SYSTEM**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****1. Technical Field:**

[0001] The present invention relates in general to portable computing security devices and in particular to security devices that limit movement of a portable computer by unauthorized individuals. Still more particularly, the present invention relates to a combination power cord and computer security system.

2. Description of the Related Art:

[0002] Portable computing devices such as, for example, laptop computers, have become increasingly popular and increasingly technologically complex. The increased desirability of such devices has resulted in an increased likelihood that the computing device may be stolen. Consequently, theft-deterrent devices utilized with such portable computing systems have become well known.

[0003] Many portable computing devices are provided with a specially designed security slot which may be utilized to lock the computer to a particular physical location. Examples of such devices may be seen in United States Patent No. 6,000,251, United States Patent No. 5,502,989 and United States Patent No. 6,155,088.

[0004] Devices such as those disclosed within the above-referenced patents are effective at deterring unauthorized movement of a portable computer device to which such devices are secured by localizing the portable computing device to a relatively immovable object. The materials of the lock are designed so that the housing must be damaged in order to separate the lock from the portable device, thus inhibiting unauthorized movement of the portable device.

[0005] As successful as such devices are, these devices are unable to provide protection for portable computing devices, when the portable computing device in question lacks a particular security slot. Further, such devices frequently do not prevent the unauthorized use of the portable computing device while it is secured by such devices, and the user is required to carry

around a security cable and lock, in addition to the other accessories necessary to operate a portable computer.

[0006] United States Patent No. 6,522,532 discloses a cable docking system for utilization with a computer which permits the computer to be securely engaged to a docking system which is permanently mounted to a table, desk or other device. Such devices provide excellent security for portable computing devices; however, the advantage of portable computing devices is the ability of a user to utilize such device in many different locations and the necessity of utilizing the device only in the presence of a docking station, such as that disclosed with the aforementioned patent, mitigates against widespread use of this technique.

[0007] Consequently, it should be obvious that a need exists for a portable computing security device which may be easily carried by the user of such a portable computing device and which does not add substantially to the complexity of utilizing such a device.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] It therefore one object of the present invention to provide an improved portable computing security device.

[0009] It is another object of the present invention to provide an improved portable computing security device which limits movement of a portable computer by unauthorized individuals.

[0010] It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a combination power cord and computer security system which may be utilized to prevent unauthorized movement of portable computing devices.

[0011] The foregoing objects are achieved as is now described. A combination power cord and security system for a portable computing device are disclosed. A security cable is provided which is constructed of a sheath of braided steel or other secure material. A lockable connector is mounted to one end of the security cable for connection to the portable computing device. A loop is provided at the other end for affixing the security cable to an anchor object. A power cable is formed integrally with the security cable. The power cable includes a power adaptor preferably mounted within the connector at one end of the security cable and a power plug at the other end for receiving electrical power.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] The novel features believed to be characteristic of the invention are set forth in the appended claims. The present invention itself, however, as well as a preferred mode of use, further objectives, and advantages thereof, will best be understood by reference to the following detailed description of a preferred embodiment when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0013] **Figure 1** is a high level block diagram of a portable computing device which may be utilized with the security system of the present invention;

[0014] **Figure 2** is a pictorial representation of a portable computing device secured by utilizing the combination power cord and security system of the present invention; and

[0015] **Figure 3** is a partially cutaway, schematic representation of the combination power cord and security system of the present invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0016] With reference now to the figures and in particular with reference to **Figure 1**, there is depicted a high level block diagram of a portable computing device **10** which may be utilized with the security system of the present invention. As depicted, portable computing device **10** includes a central processing unit **12**, random access memory **14** and a non-volatile storage device such as Hard Disk Drive (HDD) **18**. Additionally, power supply **16** is depicted within portable computing device **10**. Each of these elements is interconnected via bus **20** in a manner well known to those having ordinary skill in the art and disclosure of the specifics of such construction is not part of the present invention.

[0017] Still referring to **Figure 1**, as depicted therein, power supply **16** is coupled to power terminal **22**. Power terminal **22** is preferably mounted externally on the chassis of portable computing device **10** in a manner well known in the prior art. Additionally, proximate to power terminal **22** is lock receptacle **24**. Lock receptacle **24** will be utilized in a manner which will be described in greater detail herein, to affix one end of the combination power cord and security system to portable computing device **10** in a manner which will prevent unauthorized movement thereof.

[0018] Referring now to **Figure 2**, there is depicted a pictorial representation of a portable computing device which is secured utilizing the combination power cord and security system of the present invention. As illustrated, portable computing device **10** is disposed upon table **30**. A combination power cord and security cable **32** is utilized to couple portable computing device **10** to electrical power. Combination power cord and computer security cable **32** preferably includes a connector (not shown) at one end thereof for lockable connection to portable computing device **10** and a loop **34** sized to permit the connector to pass therethrough which may be utilized to anchor portable computing device **10** to table **30** or another similar immovable object.

[0019] An AC power unit **36** is depicted. AC power unit **36** plugs into an electrical plug present within combination power cord and security cable **32** and provides electrical power to an electrical power cable formed integrally with combination power cord and security cable **32**. Finally, AC power unit **36** is depicted as being plugged into electrical outlet **38**, and electrical power is thus provided to portable computing device **10**.

[0020] Finally, with reference to **Figure 3**, there is depicted a partially cutaway, schematic representation of combination power cord and security cable **32** of **Figure 2**. As illustrated, portable computing device **10** preferably includes a power terminal **22** and a lock receptacle **24**. As illustrated, connector **42** is securely mounted to one end of combination power cord and security cable **32**. Connector **42** preferably includes a power adaptor **44**, adapted to mate with power terminal **22** and a lock cylinder **46** which is adapted to mate with lock receptacle **24**. A key **50** is provided such that when connector **42** is plugged into portable computing device **10** and key **50** is activated, lock cylinder **46** rotates, securing connector **42** to portable computing device **10**. Of course, those skilled in the art will appreciate that a combination lock may also be utilized without departing from the spirit of the invention.

[0021] As illustrated in cutaway fashion, combination power cord and security cable **32** is preferably formed utilizing a braided steel sheath **62**, or other suitable secure materials such as, for example, an aramid fiber such as KevlarTM. KevlarTM is a trademark of the EI du Pont de Nemours and Company. Embedded within sheath **62** is an electrical cable **60**. The end of combination power cord and security cable **32** opposite connector **42** preferably includes a loop **34** which is sized to permit connector **42** to pass therethrough. In this manner, a bight **52** may be formed which is suitable for anchoring portable computing device **10** to a large and preferably immovable object, such as table **30**.

[0022] As depicted, combination power cord and security cable **32** preferably includes a power connection **56** into which a power cable may be temporarily plugged and which connects the embedded electrical cable **60** within combination power cord and security cable **32** to AC power unit **36**. AC power unit **36** conventionally utilizes power plug **40** to provide operating electrical power to portable computing device **10**.

[0023] As described herein, Applicants have provided a combination power cord and security cable which replaces the ordinary power cord provided with portable computing devices, such as laptop computers. By securing the electrical cable typically utilized in a power cord within a security material sheath constructed of braided steel or KevlarTM and providing the loop depicted within **Figure 3**, a user of portable computing device **10** may rapidly and efficiently secure portable computing device **10** to a large and immovable object, greatly enhancing the security

of that device, without requiring the user to carry additional security cables or devices beyond the secure power cord provided.

[0024] While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to a preferred embodiment, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes in form and detail may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.